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SUBUR VISIT OF STREROBERT THOMPSON TO CAMBODIA

I. SIR ROBERT THOMPSON AND DESMOND PALMER VISITED PHNOM PENH: SEPTEMBER 25-26. THEY WERE RECEIVED BY LONGNOL. WERE BRIEFED ON MILITARY SITUATION BY BRIGADIER GENERAL SAKE SUTSAKAN, VISITED FANK TRAINING CAMP AT KOMPAL, MET WITH BRIGADIER GENERAL: PEAU: LIM VAR FOR REVIEW OF PLANSS FOR MOBILIZATION OF POPULATION, AND HELD INDEPENDENT MEETINGS WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR ANTHONY WILLIAMS AND AUSTRALIAN CHARGE MACK WILLIAMS. IN RELATIVELY BRIEF THIME, OFFERED: I THINK THEY HAD ENOUGH EXPOSURE TO FORM SOME IMPRESSIONS: WORTH HEEDING AND THEY WILL COMMUNICATE THESE DIRECTLY TO WHITE HOUSE ON THEIR RETURN. THIS IS BY WAY OF AN INTERIM REPORT .

20 CONVERSATION WITH LON NOL TOOK A NOT ESPECIALLY INFORMATIVE: PATH: DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO FOCUS IT ONESTRE ROBERT S INTERESTS. HE RECEIVED SIR ROBERT, PALMER, LADD, AND ME PRIVATELY AND SPOKESENTIRE TIME IN CAMBODIAN WITH INTERPRETER INTO ENGLISH OF INDIFFERENT QUALITY. HE SPOKE OF HIS GRATITUDE FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE HIS ANNOYANCE THAT RELATIONS WITH THAT IFISHING VIOLATIONS IN CAMBODIAN WATERS) AND WITH SOUTH VIETNAMESE (MILITARY ACTIONS ON CAMBODIAN TERRITORY WITHOUT CONSULTATION) ARE TROUBLED ALTHOUGH IMPROVING: AND HIS CONCERN ABOUT EFFORTS OF "VIET" CONG TRAINED KHMER" TO PROSELYTIZE THE COUNTRYSIDE. WITH IT ALL, HOWEVER, HE IMBUED CONVERSATION WITH CHARACTERISTIC CONFIDENCE THAT

State Dept. review completed

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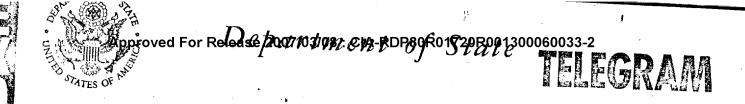
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CAMBODIANS WILL BE VICTORIOUS COME WHAT MAY AND HE REFERRED TWICZNTO FACT HE IS WAGING A PEOPLE'S WAR (HE USED FRENCH: PHRASE "GUERRE POPULAIRE"). AS WE LEFT, HE TOLD ME HE WAS AND I SUSPECT THAT COMBAT LOSSES INVOLVED IN THAT OPERATION, HOWEVER POSITIVE THE OTHER RETURNS. HAVE WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HIM. BUT THEY HAVE NOT DIMINISHED HIS CONFIDENCE IN HIS CAUSE.

30 THIS SENSE OF CAMBODIA'S CONFIDENCE IN ULTIMATE VICTORY AND JUSTICE OF ITS CAUSE IS I BELIEVE THE DOMINANT IMPRESSION WHICH, AFTER FURTHER BRIEFINGS, CONVERSATIONS, AND VISITS, SIR ROBERT TOOK AWAY WITH HIM. HE SAID THAT HE WAS GREATLY ENCOURAGED. IN PARTICULAR IN COMPARISON WITH VIETNAM, BY PATRIOTISM EVIDENCED ON ALL SIDES AND BY PREVAILING PHILOSOPHY OF CAMBODIANS TO DEFENA THEMSELVES AND TO PLOT THEIR OWN COURSES OF ACTION WITH MINIMUM OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE HE SAID A DOLLAR SPENT IN CAMBODIA SHOULD GO MORE THAN TWICE AS FAR AS: ONE IN VIETNAM, AND HE SAID HE WOULD URGE CONTINUATION DYIA PROGRAM DESIGNED AS A PRESENT TO HELP CAMBODIANS DEFEND THEM-SELVES WITHOUT INUNDATING THEM IN SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT OR CULTIVATING IN THEM ANDUNDUE SENSE OF DEPENDENCE. HE TOLD LADD HE IS IMPRESSED BY EXTENT TO WHICH THIS HAS BECOME A PEOPLE'S WAR. HE BELIEVES AS DO IN THAT WE MUST PROVIDE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WITH AS MUCH MULTILATERAL COLORATION AS POSSIBLE AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE HE SAID THAT ON HIS RETURN TO LONDON HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT HMG EXTEND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIA NOT AS SOME ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED EXPENDITURE BUT AS A POLITICAL GESTURE TO A COUNTRY WHICH IS DEFENDING ITSELF VALIANTLY AGAINST AN AGGRESSOR.

WEIGHING AGAINST ANY OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE HERE
ARE NUMBEROUS NEGATIVE FACTORS: VC/NVA DISCIPLINE AND
DEDICATION: VULNERABILITY OF ECONOMY AND COMMUNICATION ROUTES:
INFLATION AND WAR WEARINESS AND ENDEMIC BUREAUCRATIC:
INFLATION AND WAR WEARINESS AND ENDEMIC BUREAUCRATIC:
APPRASIAL THAT THE FIGHTING SPIRIT AND RESOLUTION OF THIS GOVERNMENT AND ITS SUPPORTERS ARE IMPORTANT FAVORABLE FACTORS IN THE
EQUATION.

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